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mirably brought out. Their purity of tone was universally observed; and whether in the higher or lower octaves it possessed a sweetness which could not have been produced only on a superior instrument.

"Mr. Weber himself, the manufacturer, being present, he must have been flattered by the evident favor with which his instruments were received. It was a realization of his reputation, for it is only after long and weary years that he has been enabled to obtain his ideal. He is a pianist of no mean ability, and has sought to combine in a single instrument all the qualities which combine to produce perfection."

Could I have done anything better than the above?

Yours in haste,

B. L. G.

ART MATTERS.

The National Academy will open its doors for the annual exhibition on Tuesday of next week. In the meantime the painters are anxiously awaiting "varnishing day," when their doubts as to the hanging of their pictures will be set at rest, and they the painters will be elated with joy or cast down with grief.

This matter of picture hanging is much better managed in the French Academy; there a committee is appointed by government who hang the pictures to the best of their knowledge; at the end of six weeks a second committee of amateurs and one professional artist are appointed, the exhibition is closed for a few days and the pictures re-hung. This, after several years trial, has been found so entirely satisfactory that at the present day the amateur committee are seldom, if ever, appointed, the artists finding that the first does its work with quite as much justice and much greater discrimination.

Were this plan adopted here there would be much less grumbling, and the Academy would be spared the various anathemas that are so profusely heaped upon its devoted head; but the great trouble among us is that the public and the public mind are altogether too much engaged in politics and money-making to pay that attention to art which it deserves, and until we are more matured as a people, more educated up to the proper level of appreciation, and our ideas more enlarged, this state of affairs must continue, and Art be confined to a certain *clique*, who, there is no denying the fact, bestow their favors, to a great extent, according to the political tenets of the artist.

The National Academy of Design has it within its power to do a great deal towards the art instruction of the masses; the acknowledged mouthpiece of American painters it is looked up to, as such, by the public at large and its actions regarded with interest by many; in view of this, none but large minded, energetic men should be elected to prominent positions, men who have already gained great reputations and can afford to lend a helping hand to their younger brethren of the brush, not in a financial way, but by hanging their pictures at least with justice, and giving them such encouragement as shall cause them to press forward with greater hope and lighter hearts in the good cause.

Or, better yet, let the prominent officers of the

association, with perhaps a few exceptions, be selected from the laity, taking care to choose men of well known integrity and a thorough love of art, who will administer justice to the best of knowledge and ability.

The great trouble at present is that a number of the most prominent officers of the association are artists of medium talent, who have held their positions for years and are looked upon as permanent fixtures and who, moreover, think much more of their own personal aggrandisement than the advancement of art and really meritorious artists.

All this must be revolutionized before the National Academy can assume the position it deserves, the weak men must be gotten rid of and stronger men put in their places, men devoid of prejudices and with but one great idea, the advancement of art, then, and not until then, the National Academy will become an institution of which its members, and the whole American public will have good and just cause to be proud.

Two other points I have done. It is a great subject of complaint among our artists that they have no place wherein to exhibit their pictures; owing to the enormous influx of foreign works of art the different picture galleries are closed against them and a private exhibition is a luxury rather too expensive for the majority of our painters, in this dilemma they naturally look to the National Academy for assistance, but in vain, save at the annual exhibition and the exhibition of the Artist's Fund Society its doors are hermetically sealed and it might as well be a dry goods store as a temple of art for all the good it does to painters. Now there is no reason why the Academy should not always be open, let it be a place where an artist, after finishing what he considers to be a meritorious picture, can exhibit it so long as he shall deem fit, a small admission fee may be charged and the Academy of course receive a commission on such pictures as are sold from its walls; by this means American artists will be constantly brought before the public and their names remain fresh in the minds of picture buyers. Such a course will do more good than fifty protection tariffs and undoubtedly invest American Art with greater dignity.

Then again, according to the present system, the Art education of the laboring and poorer classes is almost entirely neglected; to obviate this let the Academy be open, free, on Sunday; then the poor man, who possibly may be fond of pictures but whose slender purse denies him the privilege of seeing them, can have an opportunity of gratifying his taste and be kept from spending a day of indolence and unprofitableness. The straight-laced hypocrites may be shocked but to the men of more enlarged ideas this must undeniably present itself as a means whereby the lower classes may be instructed and improved, may be elevated to a higher standard, and by the contemplation of the pure and beautiful may be more thoroughly taught the power and wisdom of God.

Constant Mayer's picture of "The Convalescent" is now on exhibition at the Derby Art Gallery, 845 Broadway, and has already attracted considerable notice. "The Convalescent" although not so great a work as Mr. Mayer's former efforts

"Consolation" and "The Recognition" is still a thoroughly good picture, good in drawing, good in color, and, above all, good in sentiment.

The gentleman is always happy in his selection of subjects and in "The Convalescent" this is well proven. The picture comes directly home to us. Who has not lingered over the bedside of the sick child, or sister, hoping, fearing, longing, praying, and then, when the bright day comes, and the sufferer is for a time released from her pains, with what joy do we welcome her out into the merry sunshine; how we humor her every whim and with what tender solicitude we look upon her pale face and thank the good God for once more restoring her to us?

All this we find in "The Convalescent"; there is the poor sick one, weak and exhausted, but still happy in the sunshine; by her side bends the sister who has tended her throughout the long and tedious illness, and now redoubles her zeal to make the advent into health bright and happy. Note the half-painful half-joyful expression on her face, how tenderly she gazes on the sufferer, who, just escaped from the jaws of death, beams with thankfulness and quietly enjoys the fresh breezes that play through her golden hair.

There is a deal of poetry in the subject and a deal of poetry in Mr. Mayer's picture, which, although not so thoroughly great as the two works before mentioned, must always excite our sympathy and admiration from its very truth and simplicity, setting aside the excellence of its execution.

J. Hope has just finished a picture, "Great Falls of the Potomac," which is far in advance of any of his former efforts: being characterized by a greater breadth and vigor of handling. If Mr. Hope were to adopt the style here displayed and throw aside his present ultra preraphaelitism and over elaboration of detail he would attain, and deserve, that high position among American Artists for which he so earnestly and conscientiously labors.

PALETTE.

A REMARKABLE PENCIL DRAWING.—Xavier Stoppel, a German artist, residing at Union Hill, near Hoboken, N. J., has just finished an exquisite drawing, size 52 by 68 inches, executed with Everard Fabers' Siberian pencils, which will be on exhibition the coming season of the Academy of Fine Arts, in 23d street. The subject is a full length female figure displaying remarkable grace and effect, showing the perfect play of the muscles, and yet with all the softness that is only supposed attainable in oil color, and must be seen to be understood. Mr. Stoppel has demonstrated, not only by this work, but by others which he has executed, what can be done with Fabers' pencils. Last year he sent a most beautiful copy of Kaulbach's "Attilie aus der Wahlverwandtschaft" to Paris, which has attracted the attention of the press on both sides of the water. These works are alike a credit to the artist and to the material with which he works. The one about to be exhibited both from its size and its masterly treatment, deserves a more extended notice, which we shall accord it at a future time.